

Remarks

Claims 1-15, 18-21, 23, 25 and 26 are pending in the application. Reconsideration is requested in view of the above changes and the following remarks.

Amendment of any claims is without prejudice to the filing of one or more continuing applications.

Examiner acknowledges that claims 1-15, 19-21, 23, 25 and 26 are either allowed or would be allowable if amended to overcome the objections set forth in the office action. The affected claims have been amended in each instance as suggested by Examiner. The Examiner's objection to claim 4 has been addressed by amendment of claim 4, lines 10-11 to recite "the second oligopeptide molecule". A period has been added to claim 1 to address the objection to that claim. Claim 15 has been amended to delete reference to claim 14, as suggested by the Examiner. The Examiner's objection to claim 19 has been addressed by amendment of claim 18 as detailed below.

Claim 18 has been rejected as being allegedly anticipated by Hahn *et al.*, US Pat. Pub. 2004/0067537. The Examiner specifically refers to the teaching of a method in which a peptide comprising aminoxy groups is reacted with an electrophilic reagent to form a labelled peptide.

Claim 18 has been amended to delete reference to linking moieties having formula II in step (c). Hahn *et al.* does not teach a method of labelling an oligopeptide in which the label molecule and the oligopeptide would be linked via a linking moiety having formula III, *i.e.*, the hyrazide based linking moiety. Thus, claim 18, as amended, is clearly novel over Hahn *et al.* Moreover, Hahn *et al.* provides no suggestion whatsoever of how the methods described therein could be modified to provide a labelled oligopeptide in which the linking moiety has formula III, let alone any motivation to provide such a method. Thus, claim 18, as amended to delete embodiments involving linking moieties comprising aminoxy groups, is also nonobvious over Hahn *et al.*

As amended, claim 18 is believed in condition for allowance.

The Examiner's objection to claim 21 has been addressed by rewriting this claim in independent form. In rewriting claim 21 to include the limitations of the base claim (previous claim 18), the reference to embodiments in which the linking moiety having formula III; as

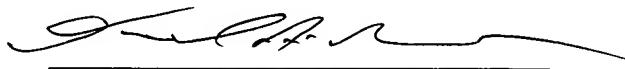
originally appeared in independent claim 18, has been deleted from amended claim 21, as the feature of amended claim 21 pertains to embodiments of previous claim 18 in which the linking moiety has formula II.

Conclusion

The claims remaining in the application are believed to be in condition for allowance. An early action toward that end is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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